

Sprinkled with history

Dive into the rich history of salt and its production in Mumbai in an online talk by researcher Neeta Sanghi



Produce of Dharavi Island. PIC COURTESY/MOGAN RODRIGUES

TANISHKA D'LYMA
theguide@mid-day.com

SALT is common. It's a common sight at our dining tables and in the names of areas across the city. It has played an important role in Mumbai's development — it was taxed, and its production sustains livelihoods as well as the natural world. Salt pans protect the city from flooding, and are now a site for debate on development plans. However, the history of salt is one that isn't often delved into, and Neeta Sanghi is here to change that. This weekend, Sanghi will be giving a virtu-



al talk titled The Salt Saga of Bombay, organised by the Maritime Mumbai Museum Society.

In this session, Sanghi will talk about the history of salt and its production in Mumbai, covering the last three centuries. You can expect to learn how salt was produced when the city was under the rule of the Portuguese and the British, who owned the salt pans, how its production changed over time, and how and why salt was smuggled during the British rule. "One of the objectives is to bring out more aspects of the history of the city," she says. After an illustrious career managing pharmaceutical supply chains for over 33 years, Sanghi got hooked on Bom-



Neeta Sanghi

bay's past. Post retirement, she pursued her MA and MPhil in History, and while poring over documents in the Maharashtra State Archives for her dissertation, she realised that salt deserves a place in the records of colonial Indian history that mostly speaks about cotton,

opium, and indigo.

The talk will interest anyone keen to understand what made Mumbai the city it is today. Sanghi looks forward to seeing students attend her talk and hopes to get them as excited about learning history as she is. "We know what is taught to us but that's about it," she says, adding, "Anyone travelling on the Eastern Express Highway would have seen the salt pans but there's a rich history around it — what is the importance of salt? How was it made, and since when?" If you're keen to know the answers to these questions, Sanghi's deep-dive session is the right place to start this quest.

FREE ON June 19, 4 pm
EMAIL: museumsocietyofbombay63@gmail.com to register

03 Elephanta Explorations

Explore the strategic aspects of Elephanta, the iconography of Siva & the history of the site in the colonial period. The potential site of the fabled Puri of Western India, Elephanta has been a marvel of strategy and art, of awe-inspiring deity and gut-wrenching tragedy. This walk will explore the strategic aspects of Elephanta in the light of trade and war, the iconography of Siva, and the history of the site in the colonial period, where it was used variously as shooting range and banquet hall. Historian and archaeologist Raamesh Gowri Raghavan will be leading the walk. **Where:** Assembly at Gateway of India; **When:** Nov 27, 9am; **Register on:** 9820465003



02 Deco By The Sea

The Maritime Mumbai Museum Society and Art Deco Mumbai Trust will take you on a street walk around one of the finest Deco precincts in Mumbai, the stretch of 35 sea-facing Art Deco buildings along Marine Drive also known as the Queen's necklace. These buildings are part of the UNESCO World Heritage 'Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai' inscribed in June 2018. Built to conform with strict planning regulations on land reclaimed as a part of the Backbay Reclamation Scheme in the early 20th century, these structures showcase nautical features and architectural elements that respond to the city's tropical climate and proximity to the sea. **Where:** Marine Drive; **When:** Mar 20, 4-5.30pm; **Register on:** www.artdecomumbai.com

